

Lymm Life

Magazine

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From Patron to President

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Editor's Opinion



AS previously published and again updated in this month's issue, Lymm is bidding to become a Town of Culture with a top prize of £3m from the Government to invest in the local community if successful.

Even getting through the first stage will provide £60,000 to help put a bid together.

Every time we publish details and updates we are met with a barrage – of “Lymm is a village – not a town!”

And every time I respond – “Yes we know – but the competition rules allow large villages to enter.”

Let's not forget Lymm, when it was a much smaller village, had its own Urban District Council responsible for its own housing, public parks, sanitation, and cemeteries before Local Government reorganisation in 1974.

Now a parish council under Warrington Borough Council, Lymm

has grown considerably over the years and is certainly the size of a small town. Let's not forget we have also boasted an official Town Crier for many years – and no one has ever raised issues about the Town status in that title. So, let's put aside any negativity and work proactively to help put Lymm on the map.

Meanwhile, one of those actively involved in the Town of Culture Bid, Cllr. Graham Gowland has decided to resign the whip from the Lib Dems following a fall-out over the group's response to the Warrington Borough Council Budget, which will see Council Tax rising by 7.48 per cent, while at the same time seeing

services being cut – so effectively paying more for less!

The Lib Dems have received a lot of criticism for not doing more to oppose some of the council's high risk investments over the years.

It has certainly caused some frustration and Cllr. Gowland has now opted to continue representing Lymm South as an Independent. But with no local elections until May 2028, it will be a while before we can see how he is judged by the electorate. As they say a week is a long time in politics!

Uncertain times are ahead but as always, we will try and give a balanced view – but with so many independent Cllrs. now I can no longer say I am politically independent – I will have to become politically neutral!

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Jason Manford named president of children's charity

COMEDIAN Jason Manford has been named as president of the Children's Adventure Farm Trust (CAFT), marking a significant new chapter for the charity, near Lymm.

In a special ceremony held at the charity's 10 acre site, the symbolic "baton" was presented to Jason by the family of former resident, the late Sir Bobby Charlton, who sadly passed away in 2023.

Sir Bobby served as President of CAFT for 23 years and was a tireless champion of the charity's mission to support children and families facing the toughest challenges.

Jason has been patron of CAFT since 2009 during which time, he has helped to raise more than £150,000, regularly giving his time to meet families and experience first-hand the impact of the charity's work.

He said: "It's such an honour to take on the role of president of the Children's Adventure Farm Trust. Sir Bobby Charlton was not only a sporting legend but a true

champion for children and families going through unimaginably difficult times. To follow in his footsteps is something I don't take lightly.

"I've seen first-hand the magic CAFT creates, giving children the chance to laugh and simply be children. I'm immensely proud to continue supporting this remarkable charity."

Ian Eccles, chief executive of the trust, added: "Jason has been

an unwavering supporter of CAFT for many years. He understands our charity, our families and the difference our work makes. We are absolutely delighted that he has accepted the role of president.

"Sir Bobby's legacy at CAFT is special and we know Jason will carry that legacy forward with warmth, energy and a deep commitment to the children and families we support."



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By Derek Webb

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What's On

LYMM PARISH COUNCIL

Next meeting Tuesday April 14th, 7:30pm
Lymm Parish Hall
Check www.lymmparishcouncil.gov.uk for details.

LYMM THURSDAY EVENING BRIDGE CLUB

Lymm Village Hall every Thursday 7pm
Details: 01925 172015

MAPLE LODGE ART GROUP

Meet each Wednesday 9.30am - 11.30pm
Oughtrington Community Centre, Lymm
Details: 01925 755926

ROTARY CLUB OF LYMM

Meets at Warburtons Parish Rooms on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month at 8pm
Contact 01925 919053

LOVING HEARTS & HANDS

Knitting for charity at Lymm Methodist Church, 2nd and 4th Thursday each month, 1.30pm - 3pm. Details: 01925 753298

LUNCH AT THE BROW

Eagle Brow Methodist Church
2nd Friday in the month
Light lunches 12 noon till 1.30pm.
All proceeds to The Y Project Room at The Inn

GARDENING CLUB

Meet Third Wednesday of the month
Lymm Baptist Church, Higher Lane. 7.30pm
Visitors welcome. £2 includes tea and cake

LYMM FLORAL ART GROUP

Lymm Village Hall
Third Monday of the month (except August and December) at 7.30pm. Visitors most welcome. Contact: 07876 176501
lymmfloralart.org.uk

LYMM PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday (ex Aug), 7.30pm
Spread Eagle pub, Eagle Brow.
See our rolling display in Lymm Library
Details: www.lymmphotosoc.org.uk

LYMM HISTORY SOCIETY

Second Monday each month
September to May
Lymm Village Hall - 8pm-9pm
Variety of history talks
Visitors most welcome
www.lymmhistory.club

LYMM WINE AND BEER CIRCLE

3rd Wednesday of the month, 8pm
The Spread Eagle Hotel
Details: 01925 756444

LYMM CONCERT BAND

Rehearsals every Thursday evening
United Reformed Church, 8pm.
Details: 01925 752934

LYMM WI

Every second Wednesday, 2-4pm at Lymm Youth and Community Centre. Visitors welcome.

LYMM AND DISTRICT MIXED VOICE CHOIR

Every Wednesday 7.30 Lymm Methodist Church. Contact 01925 601664.
cah@cstones.co.uk

PROBUS CLUB OF LYMM

A small, friendly social club for retired men and women.

Meets on second and fourth Tuesdays at 2:15pm.
Details: www.LymmProbus.club

LYMM DINGLE PROBUS CLUB

A friendly busy social club for retired men. Meets on alternate Thursday afternoons at Lymm Baptist Church.

Details: www.lymmdingleprobus.club
Club secretary 01925 759995

FRIENDS OF LYMM LIBRARY CRAFT GROUP

Lymm Sanctuary Hub
Fridays 1.30-3.00pm
Details: 01925 754016

HEATLEY WI

Meets the second Thursday of each month at St Peters Church Hall, Sandy Ln, Lymm, 7pm
Visitors welcome. Details: 01925 752014

LYMM & THELWALL U3A

Speaker meeting 3rd Thursday of the month (excluding August & December) at Thelwall Parish Hall 10.00am. Prospective members welcome.

www.u3asites.org.uk/lymm-thelwall/home
Contact: enquiries@lymmthelwallu3a.org.uk

WI enjoy a trip to Westminster to meet MP



Lymm Jubilee WI visited the Houses of Parliament as guests of Tattton MP Esther McVey.

With over 100 members and only 20 places available, a ballot was held to choose the lucky winners.

On the day the fortunate members were met by Esther at the entrance and shown to a meeting room where she explained the working life of an MP and answered any questions.

As the visit was on a Wednesday members were also able to watch Prime Minister's Questions via video link and enjoy light

refreshments with Esther there to explain the procedures.

This was followed by a guided tour of Parliament accompanied by Westminster staff, including the chance to watch a debate from the gallery and a photo opportunity on the terrace.

Some members went down for the day whilst others made the most of the opportunity to stay longer, catching up with family and friends and even taking in a show or two.





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Everyone at the farm would like to congratulate Gary and the team on 25 years of Lymm Life!



Your Brand. Our Community. One Winning Partnership.

LYMM RUGBY CLUB

Lymm RFC is at the heart of the local community. More than **2,000 people** visit each week for rugby, tennis, squash, hockey and a wide range of community activities. The club brings together families, schools, volunteers and local businesses in a welcoming and active environment.

We are proud to hold the **King's Award** for Voluntary Service, recognising our commitment to social value, wellbeing and the development of young people in Lymm.

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To explore sponsorship opportunities and find the right package for your organisation, contact us at:



sponsorship@lymmrugby.co.uk
commercial@lymmrugby.co.uk



Lymm Sanctuary Hub secures funding to support five year plan

Lymm Sanctuary Hub (LSH) is delighted to announce that it has been awarded a continuation grant from the National Lottery's Reaching Community fund. This award, combined with the donation received from Omaze in December 2025, provides security for the development of community projects for the next five years.

While this funding marks an exciting step forward, the Hub will still need to raise additional match-funding to ensure its long term sustainability. Plans are already underway to strengthen its structure, services and fundraising potential.

Team expansion

The first phase in LSH's development plan is the recruitment of a fourth member of the Community Team. This new part time role will focus on expanding The Lymm Companions (TLC) project — the Hub's befriending service created to support local residents experiencing loneliness or social isolation.

The role has been advertised and anyone with relevant skills and experience is warmly encouraged to apply before 22 March.

Sustainability and community involvement

Over the next five years, LSH will be working to secure its financial sustainability through a combination of fundraising, partnerships, and community participation.

New opportunities to support this goal will be shared throughout 2026, including an invitation to local residents with specific professional skills to join a new Advisory Panel working alongside the Trustees.

Business as usual

Lymm Hub is home to Lymm Library,

Lymm Parish Council, and Lymm Sanctuary Hub & Business Centre. Despite reduced staffing in the Library due to Council budget cuts, the Business Centre is open as normal and wishes to attract more users.

The centre is open Monday to Friday, 8.30am–5pm, and services include

- Ground floor event and meeting space;
- First floor offices and co working hotdesking; and
- Office services such as mail handling, printing and admin support.

Call out for new groups

Recent changes see new capacity to host further regular community or hobby groups. A parent and baby group or similar early years activity would be especially welcome, reflecting the site's former role as a SureStart centre and its current use for midwifery services. The site would also be ideal for groups linked to wellbeing, fitness and educational tuition. Anyone who runs a group — or wishes to start one — is encouraged to get in touch to explore new partnership opportunities.

Office space offers

Layout and occupancy changes mean there is a rare opportunity to secure a 3-person office, from two days per week up to full time access, on flexible and competitive terms.

Casual hotdesking continues

to be offered at just £14 per day including Superfast WiFi and unlimited hot drinks, making it ideal for remote and home workers seeking an affordable, quiet and local workspace.

Community garden update

Many residents have shared their desire to see the garden beside Lymm Hub completed and opened for community use. Progress has been slower than hoped due to reliance on donations and fundraising, and limited volunteer support.

To complete the garden and make it safe for public use, the Hub is appealing for the following support:

- Donations of professional expertise or competitive landscaping quotes to cover

turf removal, ground levelling, installation of an accessible pathway, and additional planting;

- Volunteers to maintain the flower beds; and
- Financial contributions for maintenance.

The Hub would welcome sponsorship or patronage from individuals or businesses in return for recognition and signage.

Connect and stay updated

For updates on Lymm Sanctuary Hub and Business Centre projects and services, sign up for the Hub newsletter or follow their social channels by scanning the QR code on our advert or visiting: www.lymmsanctuaryhub.co.uk



"Agatha Crusty and the Village Hall Murders", a killer of a comedy!

Tickets are now available for The Bridgewater Players performance of "Agatha Crusty and the Village Hall Murders" by Derek Webb and directed by Jen Aldred.

In April, the Bridgewater Players Drama Society will be putting on another exciting show, a murder mystery comedy written by Derek Webb, "Agatha Crusty and the Village Hall Murders". Set in All Saints Village Church Hall, Agatha Crusty (pronounced 'Croosty') is visiting her cousin Alice, but is caught up in all the drama of several murders which take place. The murder victims seem to be church hall committee members, which to Agatha's mind, is no coincidence. Then in comes, the not-so-astute, Detective Inspector Twigg, who is quick to accuse everyone without real evidence. It falls to Agatha to unpick clues and decipher red herrings, in order to find out who the real murderer is.

This show is a real comedic farce with quirky characters, including a flirtatious vicar, a down-to-earth caretaker, and a no-nonsense chair of the village hall committee, as well as aristocratic brother and sister (played by the same actress). As with all of the Bridgewater

Players shows, there is a mixture of the familiar cast, with the addition of new members. The role of Agatha Crusty is to be performed by veteran actress, Karen Hewitt who has played many leading characters in their shows, including Lady Bracknell, Sister George and Sheila from 'Sheila's Island'.

Based in Thelwall, the society was initially formed by six people in November 1951 in Lymm. So this year is their 75th anniversary year. This show's director, Jen Aldred, explains "We are so excited to have achieved 75 years as a society. To celebrate, as well as this comedy, we are also performing in the Lymm Festival in June with a play written by our chairperson, Kath Buckley, and we have lots of great shows planned for our "75th Anniversary Season" starting in November!"

Show dates are Thursday 23rd to Saturday 25th April. Tickets for the show can be purchased online at www.bwplayers.co.uk/tickets. Price is £9 plus booking fee online, and £10 on the door. Pre-booking is recommended as tickets are already selling. Performed at Thelwall Parish Hall, Bell Lane, WA4 2SX. Free parking is available.



Picture: Colin Drinkwater at Jorube Portrait Photography

Be part of Local Climate Action this year

Lymm Environment Action Forum (LEAF), a friendly grassroots climate action group, is calling on local residents to help drive the next wave of local environmental change. With practical projects already making an impact across the village, LEAF is now looking for fresh ideas and new energy to take its work further.

Taking Climate Action From Talk to Reality

LEAF focuses on hands on, community powered climate solutions:

- Information and advice on home energy savings, solar panels, battery storage and heat pumps;
- An infrared camera loan scheme to help residents cut heat loss and save money;
- Stalls at Lymm events on issues such as energy, recycling and cutting food waste;
- Working with Sustrans to improve access to the Trans Pennine Trail;
- Campaigning for better local bus services;
- Supporting the Lymm Solar Farm project.

These initiatives have already built momentum — but the next stage depends on widening LEAF's volunteer base.

Why we'd love to hear from you

"We're eager to welcome new people into the group — and we're especially keen to involve those who can bring creativity, fresh ideas and a hands-on attitude," says Julia Stansfield, LEAF's Chair.

"To keep local climate action relevant, practical and genuinely future focused, we need the insight and energy that the younger generation - or the young at heart - can bring to the table. Digital know how would be a bonus!"

Volunteers can help shape our plans for initiatives such as:

- Sharing practical experiences of home energy improvements to assist other residents contemplating taking the plunge;
- Energy saving advice sessions;
- Educational activities such as showing films on environmental and climate change topics;
- Developing a reusable cup scheme for the village to reduce waste and the impact on overflowing litter bins;
- Growing LEAF's social media presence & keeping the website up to date.

OR, importantly, they can bring their own passions and projects to life through LEAF.

A Flexible and Friendly Group

LEAF meets every two months for an informal chance to review current projects and discuss new ideas. Volunteers choose the projects that fit their time, interests and skills — no experience required. Just enthusiasm and a desire to make a difference locally.

"Local people. Local action. Real impact."

Interested? Email eco@lymmsanctuaryhub.co.uk

For more information visit: <https://lymmenvironmentactionforum.co.uk/> or scan the QR code on the LEAF advert.



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Lymm Environment Action Forum



Our relaxed, friendly meet-ups happen every couple of months.
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For more info about LEAF and details of our next meet-up
email eco@lymmsanctuaryhub.co.uk

No culture bid from Warrington as Lymm starts work on plan to become UK Town of Culture

AS Lymm prepares to make a bid to become UK Town of Culture, Warrington Borough Council has confirmed it won't be making an application on behalf of the town.

At a public meeting at Lymm in January there was strong community backing for exploring a bid to become a UK Town of Culture, with residents turning out to share ideas, energy, and support for a community-led approach with a top prize of

£3m up for grabs.

But Warrington Borough Council, won't be putting forward a bid with a spokesperson saying: "Whilst we won't be directly applying for the UK Town of Culture Competition, we welcome interest from any partners who are interested in applying."

Meanwhile at Lymm, work has started on putting together a bid.

Major Capital Legacy: Cultural and Community Infrastructure

If Lymm is awarded the £3 million UK Town of Culture prize, the programme would secure a lasting cultural legacy by delivering new, fit-for-purpose cultural and community infrastructure. Three capital options—each reflecting long-standing local ambition and referenced in the Parish Local Plan—have been identified to maximise impact, accessibility and deliverability within the Town of Culture timeframe.

Option 1:

Theatre and Flexible Event Space

A new theatre and flexible event space would provide Lymm with its first modern, professional-standard cultural hub. Serving young people and the wider community, the venue would support year-round, inclusive programming across performance, film, music, talks and participatory arts. This option delivers a visible and permanent cultural focal point, strengthens local creative capacity, and aligns with the Town of Culture aim of sustained cultural participation.

Option 2:

Combined Health and Events Centre (Village Centre Location)

The Parish Local Plan also identifies a combined health and events centre close to the village centre. The NHS is already scoping the project and the land has been secured, providing confidence in shorter and more certain delivery timescales. Integrating cultural activity with community wellbeing, this option enhances accessibility and inclusivity, delivers tangible outcomes quickly,



and supports the Town of Culture goal of linking culture to wider community benefit.

Option 3: Lymm Rugby Club Community Space

The planned clubhouse at Lymm Rugby Club includes a large first-floor community area for performances, seating approximately 300. Programming could include summer shows, pantomimes and children's performances. While rising construction costs mean full delivery is not yet fundable, Town of Culture investment would enable this space to become a flexible, multi-use cultural venue, fostering participation across generations and supporting the programme's aim of inclusive, community-led cultural activity.

If successful in the first round of applications there will be a £60,000 Shortlist Grant.

The £60,000 development grant would provide the seed funding needed to kickstart Lymm's cultural legacy, catalysing community activity and engagement across the village. Regardless of whether further capital funding is secured, this investment will strengthen our cultural landscape, supporting lasting participation, skills

development and local ownership of the programme.

The grant would specifically support:

- Further public consultation and codesign – ensuring the community shapes the vision and programming from the start
- Access and infrastructure audits – identifying how venues can be fully inclusive and accessible to all
- Feasibility studies and planning – testing options and identifying practical delivery pathways
- Community engagement programmes – building participation, volunteering and creative skills locally
- Fundraising strategy and commercial planning – preparing for longer-term sustainability and income generation
- Detailed budget and delivery planning – creating a clear, achievable roadmap for whichever capital option is progressed

This initial investment will energise local groups, schools and cultural providers, laying the groundwork for a vibrant, resilient and long-term cultural legacy in Lymm, even if later funding does not follow from ToC.

Sanctuary Cafe to celebrate birthday with fund-raising event

LYMM'S Sanctuary Café is getting ready to celebrate its 17th birthday with a special party and fundraising gift day.

The event on Saturday, April 11 will feature plenty of attractions, including a bouncy castle, plenty of cake and opportunities to support the "Big Build" fund to rebuild the café and the hall at Lymm United Reformed Church.

There will be opportunities to "buy a brick" towards the extension of the building which will enable the kitchen and café to be enlarged. Improved storage facilities will be provided, along with underfloor heating, improved insulation and new, double-glazed windows – all helping to make a more eco-friendly, welcoming space.

When the Sanctuary Café first opened its doors 17 years ago, it served bacon butties, toast, homemade cakes and coffee from 9.30 am to 12 noon. But demand grew and opening hours were extended to 3pm to welcome lunchtime visitors and parents before school pick-ups.

Since then, the café has become a true community hub – a family-friendly café where everyone is welcome, hosting Bumps and Babes (Tuesdays 10.30–12), Crafty Chat (Tuesdays 1.30 pm), Lymm Runners on Wednesdays, and a popular stop-off for local cycling groups.

During school holidays, there are activity days and events like All Age Kingdom Kids at Easter and a Christmas Eve Christingle. Most activities are free or low-cost.

Sanctuary Café is run mainly by volunteers, supported by a small staff team and overseen by Churches Together in Lymm and District.

But it does now need help from the community – and the 17th birthday celebration and gift day provide an opportunity for people to do so.

Anyone who can help – whether through fundraising, project management skills, industry contacts, or simply lending a hand – will be very welcome.

Email: info@sanctuarycafe.org.uk, phone: 01925 753987 or Sue on 07802 921891.

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Blood transfusion gives Labrador "Bear" a new lease of life – and a new friend!

THE team at Burford Lane Vets in Lymm have witnessed a truly heartwarming moment after they carried out life-saving emergency surgery on Labrador "Bear", which required a blood transfusion.

While blood transfusions are not uncommon at Veterinary Practices, meeting the donor and becoming friends is!

Taking up the story, Alexi Voudouris and Rachel Dean from Burford Lane Veterinary Centre, said: "A beautiful black Labrador called Bear was rushed to us after collapsing at home. He was extremely weak, and tests revealed a ruptured mass on his spleen, causing life-threatening internal bleeding. Without urgent surgery, he would not have survived.

Before we could operate, Bear needed a blood transfusion, and that's where another local Labrador stepped in.

"Moose, a regular patient at our practice, was quickly brought in by his owner and generously donated

blood, giving Bear the chance he needed. Thanks to that donation, our team was able to perform emergency surgery to remove Bear's ruptured spleen.

"We're delighted to say Bear made a fantastic recovery.

"To say thank you in person, Bear's owners later arranged a playdate so he could meet his lifesaver. The two Labradors instantly hit it off, running around together as if nothing had ever happened. Albeit carefully!

"At a time when veterinary stories often focus on pressures and challenges, moments like this are a nice reminder of the compassion, teamwork and community spirit that exists every day in local practices and their communities."



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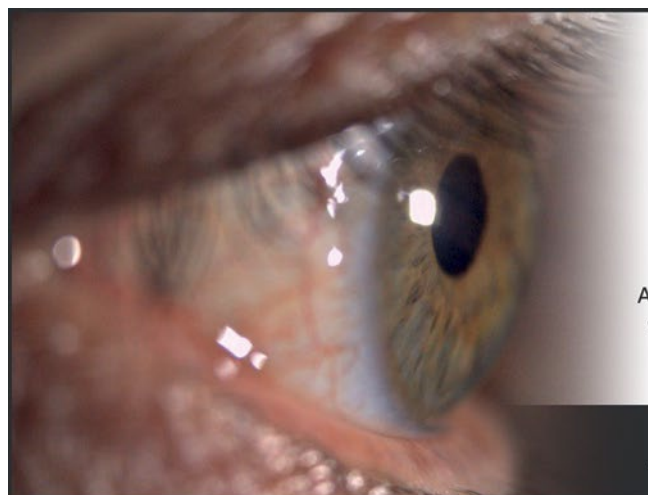
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Lib Dem councillor resigns whip after losing confidence in group leadership

LYMM-based Lib Dem Cllr. Graham Gowland has resigned the whip and will now sit as an independent on Warrington Borough Council after losing confidence in the group leadership over its stance on budget issues at the town hall.

Cllr Gowland, who represents Lymm South, has stepped down from the Liberal Democrat whip and will now sit as an independent on the borough council.

He says his decision was about putting residents first. "I believe councillors should take a constructive approach to the council's budget and governance — protecting services that matter to our community while making sure decisions are transparent and accountable."

He had been preparing a motion, with input from fellow councillors, to safeguard key services and strengthen scrutiny. However, at a recent meeting, a pre-agreed party position was presented that he felt prioritised party politics over what was best for the town.

"That made it impossible for me to continue with confidence in the group leadership," added Cllr. Gowland.

Now sitting as an independent, he will continue to represent residents, attend council meetings, and work constructively with councillors across all parties. He says this step allows him to focus fully on scrutinising decisions, advocating for the community, and

exploring the best ways to improve governance locally.

"My priority remains serving our community and making sure the council works transparently and responsibly for the people of Warrington."

Meanwhile, Cllr. Gowland, who along with 17 other opposition Cllrs. opposed Labour's budget, which included increasing council tax by 7.48 per cent, said: "Residents should not pay for decisions they never made."

He issued a statement following the council's approval of Exceptional Financial Support (EFS), highlighting that residents are now being asked to shoulder a debt that could exceed £700 million — the result of choices made over many years.

"National funding pressures have affected all councils, but not all councils made the decisions Warrington did," Cllr Gowland said. "The administration chose high-risk borrowing, commercial investments, and leveraged schemes. That gamble has failed, and now the town is paying the price."

He emphasised that EFS was not included in the administration's



manifesto, and has arisen purely as a response to fifteen years of poor management.

Cllr Gowland also challenged recent suggestions that opposition councillors had access to the planned budget for months or could have produced a fully costed alternative.

"That simply isn't true. Requests for information were denied. Briefings were limited. Claims that we had free access to officer time or internal financial data are false. Producing a lawful, balanced budget is not something that can be done on the back of a scrutiny paper or a handful of amendments."

He questioned how the same

administration responsible for creating the financial crisis could credibly present itself as the solution.

"Residents have the right to ask: how can those who put the council in this position now claim they are the ones to get it out?"

Cllr Gowland called for transparency, honesty, and accountability, and reiterated that while national funding challenges are real, local leadership and choices matter.

"Exceptional Financial Support buys time — but it does not erase the consequences of past decisions. Residents are paying for a gamble they never agreed to, and the full cost will be felt for decades."

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Your pet questions answered

By Dr Rachel Dean,
Burford Lane Vets

Is it safe for my pet to eat spring plants or flowers that start growing during spring?

It is wonderful to see spring bulbs appearing, but some can be poisonous if eaten by dogs. Daffodils, bluebells and tulips fall into this group, along with indoor plants such as lilies and amaryllis. Lilies in particular pose a serious danger to cats, and even small amounts can cause severe kidney damage. Always check whether the plants and flowers in your garden or home are safe for pets.

Are there any specific parasites I should be concerned about as the weather gets warmer in April?

As temperatures begin to climb in April, parasites such as fleas and ticks become more active. It is important to check your pet regularly, and if you often walk your dog in woodland or parks a routine preventive treatment is a sensible step. Speak with our team to select the right products and to talk through any concerns about parasites in our local area.

My pet has seasonal allergies that seem to flare up in April. How can I help them?

Pets can experience seasonal allergies, often triggered by rising pollen levels. Signs may include itchy or reddened skin, hair loss, anal gland irritation, itchy ears and watery eyes. Mild allergies may improve on their own and a hypoallergenic shampoo can sometimes help, but many pets require medication to ease discomfort. There are various ways to manage irritation. Please contact our team to discuss the most suitable options for your pet.

As spring gardening begins to get under way, are there any fertilisers or garden products I should avoid using around my pets?

Many everyday gardening



products, including fertilisers, insecticides and weed killers, may be harmful if swallowed by pets. When selecting products for your garden, choose pet safe alternatives where possible. Always keep garden chemicals stored securely and stop pets accessing treated areas for the time stated on product labels. If you think your pet may have consumed something harmful, contact us straight away.

How bad is it if my pet eats chocolate and how can I keep them safe at Easter?

Chocolate is unsafe for pets. It contains theobromine and caffeine, which are toxic to dogs and cats. The severity depends on the type and quantity eaten and your pet's weight. Dark and highly concentrated chocolate carries greater risk. Signs of chocolate poisoning can include vomiting, diarrhoea, rapid breathing, an increased heart rate and in severe cases seizures.

To help protect your pet at Easter:

- Keep chocolate stored securely and well out of reach, including Easter eggs and chocolate decorations.
- Make sure family members understand the risks and avoid giving chocolate to pets.
- Offer pet safe treats so they can enjoy the occasion without danger.

If you believe your pet has eaten chocolate, contact us immediately as prompt treatment is essential.

Local chef invites residents to indulge at new Patisserie

LOCAL chef Lara Fradgley is setting up a new patisserie in the village, LARA PATISSERIE, at 20, The Cross (in between Lymm Fish Bar and Eighteen Restaurant).

Lara is a qualified pastry chef with 7 years of experience working in local restaurants, a Manchester hotel and local premier football stadiums. She also has a Patisserie Chef teaching qualification.

"I want to offer fresh, high quality, baked goods and a cosy artisanal experience, in the heart of my home village of Lymm," Lara explains.

"I want LARA PATISSERIE to be part of my customers' end of the week ritual. Whether they are out for a morning walk, meeting a friend, or taking a well-deserved lunch break, we'll have something freshly baked and ready for them.

From indulgent, morning pastries with a locally roasted coffee; delicious savoury options for a relaxed lunchtime treat, to homemade afternoon cakes and indulgent treats with quality teas. Everything is baked in small batches, using quality ingredients

with attention to detail. Simple, comforting and made with care. I want all my customers to feel special!"

The grand opening of LARA PATISSERIE is on Saturday 28th March, 10am to 2pm and then open again, Sunday 29th March from 9am to 3.30pm.

Normal opening times will be Thursday to Saturday, 8.30am to 3.30pm and Sunday 9am to 3.30pm (from the following week).

"Customers will have the chance to sample some of my baked goods and take away a tempting treat home with them," Lara adds.

"I want LARA PATISSERIE to be a place for locals, a place for visitors and a place to indulge in an end of the week treat!"

Follow Lara's journey on Facebook and TikTok @larapatisserie and Instagram @laraspatisserie (with an s)!

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Former councillor keeping busy as playwright and author!

A former councillor from Lymm is keeping herself busy as a playwright and author!

Since standing down at Warrington Borough Council and Lymm Parish Council, Kath Buckley have been able to pursue some of her hobbies such as art and writing as well as of course continuing to support the local community of Lymm. Most recently she became Chair of Bridgewater Players and like fellow former Cllr. Anna Fradgley she has had the pleasure of writing a play script for them.

Kath said: "My play script will be performed at the Lymm Festival in June, and is called A Ghoul's Night Out. It is a comedy thriller loosely based on Blythe Spirit by Noel Coward – so expect thrills, ghosts and humour.

"Meanwhile, as part of my remit to promote St Mary's Church I have written a history and guide to the church which we have used on the National Heritage days, visits by organisations and on school events. I have also written and illustrated a short story about nice mice, bats and naughty squirrels for the Christmas Tree Festival which takes place every year at the church in early December. This little book, currently just in proof form, will go out to local schools etc before the event. It will also be sold at the event with all proceeds going to the church.

"Finally based on my own cats and drawn from pictures I took at the time

when one of them was a tiny kitten, I have written and illustrated a book about a sad cat and a mischievous kitten. This book has so far proved popular and I have had to re-print it!



Chambers Fletcher Solicitors

Divorce Column

By Peter Wilkinson
Divorce Lawyer at Chambers Fletcher Solicitors

Divorce and Dementia: A Complex and Sensitive Situation

It is estimated that around one million people in the UK are currently living with dementia, and this number is expected to rise.

Dementia is an umbrella term. Common symptoms include memory loss, confusion, communication difficulties, changes in mood or personality and problems with reasoning or decision-making. These changes can have a profound impact on families and relationships.

For many couples a dementia diagnosis brings challenges that can test even the strongest and longest of marriages. The decision to end a marriage is never an easy one, even in ordinary circumstances. When dementia is involved the situation can become particularly complex, raising difficult emotional, ethical and legal considerations.

One of the key legal issues in these situations is the question of litigation capacity. That is, whether a person is able to understand the nature of legal proceedings and give instructions to a solicitor in relation to them. This is not the same as general mental capacity. It is more specific than that. Some individuals in the earlier stages of dementia may still have the capacity to participate in divorce and financial remedy proceedings whereas others may not.

If a person lacks litigation capacity the divorce can still proceed, but additional safeguards must be put in place. For instance, a litigation friend must be appointed to conduct the proceedings on that person's behalf. This might be a trusted family member or friend, or in some cases, the Official Solicitor.

There are also important financial considerations. Dementia can lead to significant care needs, perhaps including the cost of residential care, and these factors will be relevant when financial matters ancillary to divorce are considered.

Cases involving dementia require careful handling and sensitivity. Anyone considering divorce where their spouse is living with dementia should seek legal advice at an early stage to ensure the correct procedures are followed and that the interests of all involved are properly protected.

For expert advice and assistance regarding divorce and related matters please get in touch – whatever your circumstances we have the experience and expertise to advise, guide and support you.

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New MRI scanner now onsite at Antrobus clinic

By Dr Nav Ijaz BMBS, MRCP UK, MRCGP, Chief Clinical Officer myGP Clinic

Most of the time we doctors have focused on treating disease after symptoms appear. Recently, there has been a growing shift toward preventing illness earlier and identifying problems long before they become serious.

This approach is sometimes called Medicine 3.0 and it focuses on proactive care rather than reactive treatment. Imaging technology such as MRI scanning, is starting to play an important role in that shift.

What is an MRI scan and how does it work?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), is a type of medical scan that uses powerful magnets and radio waves to produce very detailed images of the inside of the body. Unlike X rays or CT scans, MRI does not use radiation.

Inside the scanner there is a strong magnetic field. This magnetic field interacts with hydrogen atoms in the body. Since the human body is largely made of water, it contains a huge number of hydrogen atoms. The MRI machine detects those responses and the result is a very clear view of structures such as the brain, spine, joints, muscles and many internal organs.

Why MRI is useful in preventative medicine?

Preventative medicine is about identifying disease earlier, ideally before symptoms develop. MRI is particularly helpful here because it can detect subtle structural changes that might not yet be causing

symptoms.

For example MRI can identify early joint wear and tear, spinal disc problems, certain neurological conditions and tissue abnormalities at a stage when treatment options are often simpler and more effective. In some cases it can reveal findings that allow lifestyle changes or monitoring rather than waiting until a condition becomes advanced.

Within a primary care setting this can be particularly powerful. Traditionally patients might wait weeks or months for referral based imaging. Having MRI available within the clinic (such as the one at the myGP Antrobus site) allows faster investigation when concerns arise and helps clinicians make better informed decisions earlier.

Some limitations and drawbacks

While MRI is a powerful diagnostic tool, it is not perfect and it is important to recognise its limitations.

One issue is that MRI can sometimes identify incidental findings. These are abnormalities that may never cause symptoms or problems but once detected they can lead to further investigations and anxiety. This is why it is important to discuss scans with your doctor.

It is important to note that certain types of metal implants, pacemakers or other electronic devices can be affected by the magnetic field. Patients are always screened carefully before entering the scanner to make sure it is safe for them.

The scan itself is painless but for some the scanner can feel enclosed. To combat this the scanner at our site is shorter to avoid the claustrophobic feeling. Most scans take between 20 and 45 minutes depending on what is being examined.

Finally, not everyone needs an MRI. Sometimes ultrasound, X ray or clinical assessment alone provides the necessary answer. Incidentally, we also offer the former at myGP clinic.

Primary care MRI

We at myGP clinic recognise the shift to preventative medicine and as such have introduced onsite ultrasound and MRI at our Antrobus clinic. Rather than going to hospital, our members can come to a less daunting, more comfortable location to have their scans.

For patients this means fewer delays between consultation and investigation. For our doctors it means better information to guide early intervention and preventative strategies.

Preventative medicine is not about scanning everyone for

everything. It is about using the right tools at the right time

MRI scanning is one of those tools and its presence within myGP clinic represents an important step toward a more proactive model of healthcare.



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Obituary

Kenneth (Ken) Birks

The funeral has taken place of Ken Birks, who passed away peacefully on the 23rd January at the age of 79.

A very proud member of the Lymm community for many years, Ken will be remembered by many as the omni present face of Stephanie's Flower shop in the heart of the village. After 39 years in business, Ken retired and enjoyed a full life with Steph.

He is survived by his wife Steph (now living in Keate House) and two sons Tim and Chris.

William Corless

The funeral has taken place of William 'Bill' Corless, who passed away at home on January 29 aged 87.

Bill as he was known, a retired locomotive driver is survived by his wife Norma and two sons, Chris and Simon.

Bill and Norma were inseparable for 70 years and well known Lymm folks.

David Gale

The funeral has taken place of David Gale, who passed away on February 1, aged 79.

David was a regular member of Lymm Probud, Lymm History Society and Oughtrington Bowling Club, which he thoroughly enjoyed.

He is survived by his loving wife Jean, adored daughter Alison and cherished grandson Callum.

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